

Other Agencies You Can Call for Assistance

- County Department of Social Services – Adult Protective Services staff investigate allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation of older and disabled adults (APS). The number for your local office can be found in the government section of the phone book.
- Division of Health Service Regulation – The state's regulatory body responsible for the licensing and safe operation of nursing and adult care homes. They can be reached toll free in NC at:
1-800-624-3004 or (919) 855-4500.
- Long Term Care Ombudsman Program – Serve as advocates for residents and their families. The state program can be reached toll free in NC through the CARELINE at
1-800-662-7030.

Regional ombudsmen can be reached at the number listed below.

Crime can happen anywhere, even in a long term care facility

Most facilities provide a safe place for residents. However, residents can become victims just like anyone else and unfortunately, bad things happen to them, too. It's for this reason even one criminal act is one too many and should be reported. In instances, where an offense has occurred or it's even suspected, the facility Administrator should be notified immediately along with local law enforcement.

Administrator's # _____

Law Enforcement's # _____

S.A.F.E. in Long Term Care

S.A.F.E. in Long Term Care is an initiative of the North Carolina Long Term Care Ombudsman Program located within the Division of Aging and Adult Services. The Taskforce created state level partnerships with law enforcement agencies and the court system as outlined by Amendments to the 2000 Older Americans Act. For additional information, call 919-733-8395.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to develop cooperative relationships between agencies that are charged with protecting individuals in long term care settings, through the development and distribution of educational and training materials to professionals and the public focused on recognizing and responding to crimes occurring in long-term care settings.

Partner Organizations

NC Department of Health and Human Services



NC Association of Long Term Care Facilities

NC Association of Area Agencies on Aging

NC Department of Justice

NC Justice Academy

NC Health Care Facilities Association

NC Regional Long Term Care
Ombudsman Association

Alzheimer's Association of Eastern NC

Chapel Hill Police Department

Friends of Residents in Long Term Care

Hillside Nursing Center of Wake Forest

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Strategic Alliances For Elders in Long Term Care

A multidisciplinary taskforce
dedicated to protecting residents
from harm



This is my Home

Long Term Care facilities are homes for adults who need extra assistance on a daily basis. Although, they are institutional by design the environment is meant to be homelike. Choices and options taken for granted by adults living in private homes in the community sometimes fail to extend to long term care residents. For example, if a home is robbed and property is stolen, the first response would be to call the police and report the crime. Unfortunately, in many instances when this same situation occurs in a long term care facility law enforcement is NOT notified. An internal investigation by the facility should be conducted. A perpetrator may or may not be caught. The facility may not be required to contact law enforcement based on the nature of the incident.

This difference in response to the same situation shows why concerned citizens should pay close attention to making sure every individual is given the same protection under the law.

The Trust Factor

When an individual is placed in long term care, there are a set of unspoken expectations surrounding their care and safety. They are:

- The care provided by the staff will be of a higher quality due to their training and knowledge.
- Care will be of good quality because you are paying for specialized services.
- Safety is expected due to the number of people involved in the operation of the facility and the potential number of daily opportunities for direct contact.

Lack of trust can and will occur if issues surrounding care and suspected criminal activity against residents are not addressed quickly and appropriately.

Factors that Affect Reporting

- Victims may feel trapped in the situation and not want to get the person in trouble.
- They have fewer options to leave, and may blame themselves for the situation.
- Vulnerable residents may be unable to protect themselves or tell what has happened.
- If they are capable of reporting wrongdoing, their concerns may not be taken seriously.

Unexpected Danger

Individuals capable of mistreating elders and people with disabilities seem very ordinary. Many of them are known to residents, others are strangers. They can be people the resident sees daily and may include staff members, visitors, other residents and even family members.

When to call for back up

Circumstances that warrant immediate police involvement include but are not limited to:

- Physical Assault
- Sexual Assault
- Theft
- Misuse of Funds
- Forgery
- Identity Fraud

**CALL 911 OR LOCAL
LAW ENFORCEMENT**

If you see a crime or a resident tells you they have been mistreated and a **reasonable explanation** can't be provided then facility administration and law enforcement need to become involved to resolve the concern.

